



Rockport Millbrook Meadow Committee

Fund-raising Subcommittee

Town Hall, Rockport, MA 01966

Charmaine Blanchard
Marcia Lombardo, Treasurer
Susan Gray, Advisor

Samuel W. Coulbourn
Shannon Mason, Chair
Betsy Giannoccaro, Advisor

Minutes of Subcommittee Meeting, Thursday, December 5, 2013, 7:00 p.m., Brenner Friends' Room, Rockport Public Library

7:02 p.m. Subcommittee Chairwoman **Shannon Mason**, called the meeting to order. Also present were Susan Gray, Betsy Giannoccaro, Ted Tarr, Marcia Lombardo, and Sam Coulbourn. Charmaine Blanchard arrived at 7:20 p.m. Sam kept the minutes.

1. Plans for Fundraising Committee: Since Charmaine was delayed at another meeting, Shannon briefly discussed the Essex County Community Foundation (ECCF) application, then moved directly to plans for a fund-raising committee. Susan mentioned examples of similar local area funds, then asked how much we were asking for. Sam and Shannon said that the amount is about \$800,000 after the \$220,000 that is currently available, but when the Restoration contractor completes the first phase we may have a much better picture of our goal.

Susan said that we will need to set aside some money for promotion. Even if we can find local consultants to help *pro-bono* with press kits and solicitation materials, we will still have mailing and printing costs, etc. You will need five to seven people dedicated to asking for donations. First, it would be good to have people who will put up challenge money—this will encourage others to give if they know that their donation will be matched and doubled.

Betsy added that you will need an “elevator speech”, a succinct paragraph that describes what it is we are asking, in a way that encourages giving. Susan added that the first task is to make the case. Susan added that, since this fund will be a part of ECCF, it will be visible on their website.

Betsy volunteered that it would be good if you were to arrange for a sculpture contest—have a competition, solicit donations, and get excitement that would draw attention to the fund raising effort. Sam recalled that Lura Phillips, the champion of the Meadow, had done quite a lot with a piece by a famous sculptor. [Not clear whether Betsy was suggesting the sculpture idea as something to be auctioned off, or something that might eventually be located in the Meadow.] Charmaine advised that our plans for the Meadow

should be simple and close to nature. We don't want to incur big maintenance costs that will be an excessive burden for future custodians of the Meadow.

Sam mentioned that there is a tremendous amount of nostalgia tied up with the Meadow and Pond that we heard at our Visioning session last spring, and see all the time on our Facebook page.

Susan, discussing a brochure for soliciting donations, said we should have some of those nostalgic quotes...let people give their stories. Sam suggested soliciting donations for trees or shares of trees. Charmaine suggested naming granite blocks for individual donations. Sam mentioned that Lura handled the need people feel to see a plaque with their name (or the honoree) on it by installing those in Town Hall. Those names could be memorialized on a website, and we could even post QR codes on signs in the Meadow that would allow Smartphone users to go right to the website.

2. Completion of ECCF Application: Charmaine circulated materials that will be required to apply for membership in ECCF. Discussion turned to the names of "Advisors" and the name of the restoration and maintenance fund as listed by ECCF. We will need to send \$1000 with our application, and all that will have to be approved by the Board of Selectmen. Sam suggested that we could draw that money from our treasury, but Susan countered saying that this would be an excellent time to ask for individual contributions to raise the first \$1000.

Sam said: Task 1 is to complete the ECCF application, and Task 2 to assemble our fundraising organization.

Betsy asked what be the annual cost for maintenance. Sam said that we would have to get that from the Director of Public Works. Susan suggested that we might ask for donations and also ask for people to pledge an annual donation for the maintenance fund. Members tackled the name of the fund. Sam said the MMC had voted to change the name that is now the "Friends of Millbrook Meadow and Mill Pond" to "Millbrook Meadow and Mill Pond Conservancy". However, the Conservancy will be more than a fund raising organization. It will also include people who want to be a part of supporting the Meadow and Pond for other reasons than money. Susan suggested that for the purposes of ECCF listing, the name should include Rockport and should be shorter. Members agreed, subject to concurrence of a majority of the MMC, to call it "Rockport Millbrook Meadow Fund."

Betsy asked, "Who will be the point person?" Shannon answered "Me". Susan said, "We will need ten names to raise \$1000." Shannon said that we could do that now.

Susan advised that we keep the list of askers small, and insist on keeping donors and their details strictly private.

Charmaine said a few words about preparing a grant application to the Bruce Anderson Foundation, since she was a friend of the family. She will use material in the application for ECCF as her model. She needs to submit it by February 2014.

Betsy said it will be important to have nice brochures. Susan said it would be helpful for Betsy and her to know how to word the "asks". E.g.: "Would you consider...?"

Betsy said that it may seem "hokey" but a thermometer display might be very useful in stimulating donations. Susan added that we should arrange for people to use their credit cards for donations. Sam said we will need to build a website.

Sam summarized Tasks:

1. Complete ECCF application and send to Board of Selectmen.
2. Produce our fundraising brochure, etc.
3. Charmaine and Shannon to complete application for Anderson Fund. With fundraising subcommittee review prior to submission.
4. Next fundraising subcommittee meeting Wednesday, January 22, 2014. Provide names for raising first \$1000.

3. Set Next Meeting: Wed. Jan. 22, 2014. Shannon will post and book.

Approved:

**Shannon Mason,
Chair**